

High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Be an active listener

Encourage your teen to sit where she has a clear view of her teacher and to face forward. This will help her focus on the lesson. Also, making eye contact and nodding occasionally will keep her in listening mode. Then when her teacher pauses, she can use the moment to reflect on what was just said.

Chef's challenge

Cook up family fun with this exercise in creative thinking. Divide into two teams and hold a cook-off. Have each team choose five ingredients that the other team can use to make a dish. See what you both come up with, and then enjoy tasting each other's work.

Texting can wait

A quarter of teens respond to a text message at least once every time they drive. Tell your child that reading or answering even one text could cost someone's life. Your example will help! Make a pact that you will each put your phone in the glove compartment when you drive and pull into a parking lot if you need to use it.

Worth quoting

"Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean."
Ryunosuke Satoro

Just for fun

Q: Why did the computer squeak?

A: Someone stepped on its mouse!



It's about time

Each student starts the day with the same number of hours. But some get more done than others. What's their secret? They manage time well! Suggest these strategies.

Look ahead

Your high schooler should use a monthly calendar to fill in test dates, project due dates, practices, events, and work schedule. By glancing over it as he adds items, he can see how his weeks are filling up and plan accordingly. For instance, if he has a lot going on the same week a project is due, he might aim to finish a week sooner or find someone to take a work shift for him.

Eliminate time-wasters

Have your teen pay attention to what he tends to do to avoid studying, such as playing video games or watching TV. Then, he could identify if an activity is a "must do" or a "want to do"—and use the "want to" activities as rewards



for finishing the "musts." For example, he might tell himself he can play a game *after* he's completed his work. This will help him stick to the task at hand.

Be realistic

High school homework and studying should generally take a couple of hours each day. So if your teen has soccer practice until dinnertime, he probably can't *also* meet a friend for smoothies or go to a movie. If he finds himself routinely squeezed for time, he should reevaluate his commitments and cut back. 👍

Have a homework plan

Homework is a big part of your teen's job as a student. Share these tips to help her do her best:

- Ask questions *before* leaving school. That way, you can get started more quickly at home. If you realize later you're missing information, contact a classmate—and move on to another assignment while waiting for a response.

- Chip away at work. Shorten your to-do list by taking advantage of in-class work time and study halls. Or read textbook chapters, review notes, and do math problems while waiting for after-school meetings to begin.

- Tackle assignments in an order that suits you. You might start with the toughest one so your mind is alert. Or begin with a favorite subject to get yourself going. 👍



“College, here I come!”

Is your high schooler college-bound? The all-important application process will set the stage for her next big scene. Pass on this advice.

Tailor applications

Keep each college’s profile in mind so you can show how your interests and qualities would be a good match. Say you’re the music writer for your school paper, and your dream school has a student-run radio station. Mention that you hope to join the station and have your own radio show in college. Also, be sure to follow directions closely (include requested information,



stick to word-count limits). Finally, you don’t want your application thrown out because of careless errors, so proofread carefully.

Make essays count

The essay is your chance to let colleges get to know you. Brainstorm ideas for personal

stories or anecdotes that set you apart and show you in your best light. *Note:* You can also use your essay to explain a blip in your performance, like a low math grade one year.

Stay on track

Register now to take or retake the SAT or ACT. Keep application and scholarship deadlines front and center by listing them on your calendar. And ask for recommendation letters at least six weeks before due dates. That way, teachers, coaches, or administrators will have enough time to send them. 👍

Parent to Parent

Smooth move

Our family recently moved, and my son Josh is enrolled in a new high school. We both have been nervous about making the change.



When we got to our new town, I called the school and arranged for us to meet with Josh’s new counselor. He showed Josh his course options and helped him decide what to sign up for. I was glad that he also asked Josh about extracurriculars he might want to join—we all know that will be a good way for him to make friends and get connected to his new school.

Finally, the counselor suggested ways I could plug in, too. He recommended signing up for the school’s “info blasts,” registering for the online grade-tracking system, and joining the PTO.

It’s going to take time for us to get settled. But I feel like we’re at least on the way. 👍

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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Support for bullied peers

If your teen knows someone who is being bullied, he may feel helpless—but there is something he can do. Here are ways he could make a difference.

Reach out. Simply showing a bullying victim he cares may help the person feel better. Your teenager might include him by asking him to sit with his friends at lunch or to hang out after school. Being accepted will increase the victim’s confidence.

Report it. Coming forward will help keep a victim safe. If your child sees someone being bullied, he could get an adult to intervene. He should also report the incident to someone in authority later.

Think bigger. Getting involved in schoolwide anti-bullying efforts can support victims and reduce bullying. Encourage your high schooler to join a peer mediation team or to make posters for an anti-bullying campaign. If his school doesn’t have programs like that, he could talk to the principal about starting one. 👍



Q&A

For the love of reading

Q My daughter used to love reading, but now she rarely picks up a book. How can I encourage her to read for fun?

A Help put reading back on her radar by making it a family affair. You might read a young adult book you’ve heard about—then ask her to read it, and compare notes. Or share an adult book you’ve read that you think is appropriate and she would enjoy.

Also, stop by the library together. She could look for books her friends have mentioned or ask a librarian to recommend some. Scanning book jackets or first chapters might help her choose.

Suggest that she wander through nonfiction aisles for topics that interest her, too. *Hint:* If your teen has a tablet or an e-reader, she may be able to download library books. 👍

